

who stated that he is determined to avoid Israeli loss of life and will act accordingly. I also told him that the Israelis intended to ease up on the borders as long as there were no threats to security; the Israeli government position was that all the violence must stop prior to any talks taking place. I then encouraged him to talk to the Israelis.

Foreign Minister Shara said I had persuaded Syria, or perhaps, more accurately been a factor, to enter into negotiations with Israel in my numerous discussions with former President Hafaz El-Assad during the 1980's and 1990's. I had first visited Damascus in 1984 and had met with President Assad almost every year from 1988 to 1998. Minister Shara stated that only after beginning discussions with the Israelis did it become apparent that they didn't want peace. I reminded him that both sides came very close on the Golan and that a dialogue must continue.

Our attention then turned to Iraq, China and recent American politics as well as efforts to exchange Parliamentarians with Iran.

We left Damascus and flew into Souda Bay, Crete, which houses the U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, and Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron Two, VQ-2, a unit responsible for reconnaissance missions for the Mediterranean, and which is the counterpart to the unit that was involved in the recent mishap with a Chinese pilot in international waters off the coast of China.

I was met by Captain Steve Hoefel, the Base Commanding Officer and was set up in quarters for the night. That night, Rear Admiral Steve Tomaszewski, the Commander of the Mediterranean Air Fleet, flew in for a brief to be held the next morning.

On Friday, April 20, we received a classified brief on the mission of the base and its reconnaissance aircraft. The base's main responsibility is to support and resupply the forward-deployed Navy and Marine Corps forces. It has the largest fuel storage facility, largest ammo storage facility and the deepest port in the Mediterranean, and is strategically located near the Mid-East.

We toured the base, and the port facility located nearby. A large amount of construction was occurring on the dock with the installation of new facilities designed to give sailors and Marines all the amenities of home when they dock. I was pleased to find two Pennsylvanians among the many Navy Construction Battalion sailors working on the structures.

We also had the opportunity to tour an EP-3 aircraft similar to that which remains in China, and were briefed on the various station's responsibilities during flight operations, as well as talk to several of the crew members. We also had the opportunity to see an E3 AWACS on the runway.

From Crete we flew to Rome where we received a brief by the Charge

d'Affairs William Pope, and Margaret Dean, Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs. We discussed the effect of the European Union on NATO, reviewed the current areas of work for the embassy, and the effect of the strong U.S. dollar on tourism. In addition, I briefed them on parts of my visit to Florence including our meeting with the attorneys for Ferragamo, and our visit to the Georgetown campus.

Margaret Dean was familiar with the case that the Ferragamo attorneys had told us about in which a person purchased counterfeit goods at such a low price that the judiciary reasoned the purchaser could not have believed the goods to be authentic, and therefore found no fraud in the sale. She stated that often, because of that case, sellers of counterfeit goods often go so far to label the goods as "fake" to avoid prosecution.

The Embassy reported that it doesn't have any one overriding area that it concentrates on. It has several areas of concentration which include tourism, trade disputes, military issues, and the Mid-East situation. Charge d'Affairs Pope reported that Italy had changed a lot and had become a fairly different place in the last decade. He reported a recent high-tech emphasis that has helped propel the country's economy to the 6th largest in the world. The country has also benefitted from the increase in tourism generated by the strong American dollar.

On April 21, we flew from Rome to Philadelphia.

I yield the floor.

IN APPRECIATION OF ALYCE AND JACK BERGGREN

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity today to honor two very special people from my hometown of Aberdeen, SD. Alyce and Jack Berggren have contributed tirelessly to the arts of South Dakota, and I am blessed to call Alyce and Jack my long-time friends.

Alyce Bedrosian grew up in Chicago in an Armenian family. After earning a masters degree in piano from Northwestern University, she was hired by Northern State Teachers College in 1947. Though she carried a return train ticket from her concerned father, Alyce decided to remain in South Dakota. She never used the ticket.

Jack Berggren's boyhood was spent a world away in Scottsbluff, a small town in western Nebraska. He studied voice at Hastings College in Hastings, NE, and came to Northern State University in Aberdeen in 1949. There, he met Alyce, and they began performing together. In Jack's own words, he married his "accompanist" in 1950.

For almost half a century, the Berggrens have touched the lives of countless NSU students and music lovers of the northern plains. "Dr. B.," as his students affectionately call him, taught voice, directed choirs and served as the NSU Dean of Fine Arts.

His annual Messiah performances rekindle fond memories among many Aberdonians. Alyce continues to define excellence in piano performance and teaching, regularly accompanying students to this day.

Over two decades ago, friends, faculty, alumni and students surprised the Berggrens with a musical thank you. In 1978, to honor both Jack and Alyce, their community sponsored "The Gala Concert for the benefit of the Northern State College Music Department." In addition to NSU music students and faculty, the concert included the Aberdeen Barbershop Chorus and the Elks Chorus.

Gala II was held in 1989, and this year, May 5, marks the third Gala concert. I am pleased to know that the Johnson Fine Arts Center will once again display the talents of those touched by the Berggrens. I only regret that I cannot be there in person to enjoy the event and the company of Jack and Alyce. Instead, I hope this statement will serve as my small contribution and a symbol of immense gratitude to Jack and Alyce for their contributions to the musical arts in South Dakota.

TRIBUTE TO KATHRYN COLE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to a very special person in South Dakota who has dedicated many years to the Northern Black Hills' Retired Seniors Volunteer Program.

Today, the directors and volunteers of this RSVP program will gather at their annual recognition banquet to celebrate the dedication and hard work of Kathryn Cole, who is retiring from this RSVP community after 21 years of service. In fact, for 20 of those years, Kathryn served as the director of this important program.

The generous gift of Kathryn Cole's time and experience has benefitted those around her in countless ways, and I truly applaud her "can-do" spirit, her determination, and her dedication to the betterment of the communities of the Northern Black Hills area. From Spearfish to Belle Fourche to Lead, Kathryn has sent hundreds of volunteers to serve and support local communities. With her warm spirit, she has always made a special effort to ensure that volunteers have the opportunity to participate in the activities that both interest and inspire them. From tutoring at local schools to delivering Meals on Wheels to offering services to the High Plains Heritage Museum and the Mathews Opera House, Kathryn has made an immeasurable contribution to the Northern Black Hills.

There is a special feeling of satisfaction that comes only from volunteering. Through her tremendous leadership, Kathryn Cole has helped seniors experience that satisfaction with service to their communities. I know my